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REVIEW OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE RECOMMENDATIONS AND DECISIONS ADOPTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY AT ITS TENTH SPECIAL SESSION

Advisory Board on Disarmament Matters

Report of the Secretary-General

1. Pursuant to section III of General Assembly resolution 37/99 K of 13 December 1982, the Advisory Board has the following functions:

(a) To advise the Secretary-General on various aspects of studies and research in the area of arms limitation and disarmament carried out under the auspices of the United Nations or institutions within the United Nations system, in particular on the integration of a programme of such studies with a comprehensive programme of disarmament, once this had been established;

(b) To serve as the Board of Trustees of the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR);

(c) To advise the Secretary-General on the implementation of the World Disarmament Campaign;

(d) At the specific invitation of the Secretary-General, to provide him with advice on other matters within the area of disarmament and arms limitation.

2. By resolution 38/183 O of 20 December 1983, the General Assembly, inter alia, requested the Secretary-General to report annually on the work of the Advisory Board on Disarmament Studies. In 1989, the Secretary-General decided to make a number of changes in the functioning of the Board, so as to

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* A/46/150.

facilitate a broader interpretation of the Board's existing mandate and to permit the Secretary-General to draw on the accumulated experience and wisdom of the Board for advice on matters within the area of arms limitation and disarmament. The title of the Board was also modified to "Advisory Board on Disarmament Matters".

3. The Board held its twenty-second session from 12 to 18 July in New York, under the chairmanship of Mr. Boris Krasulin of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. The chairmanship of the Board rotates annually. The present membership of the Board is shown in the annex.

4. The Board met away from Headquarters in closed informal session on 12 and 13 July to discuss current developments and trends in international affairs and the implications therein for the role of the United Nations in the area of international security, arms limitation and disarmament. In addition to the members of the Board, also present were Mr. James F. Leonard of the United States of America (one of the experts involved in the preparation of the study on effective and verifiable measures which would facilitate the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East) and Mr. Rolf Ekeus of Sweden (Chairman of the Special Commission established under section C of Security Council resolution 687 (1991)). Presentations by the two guests were followed by a lively discussion covering the broad range of security and disarmament issues at present before the international community. In response to the Secretary-General's request to the Board in 1989, the outcome of the Board's discussions on these questions was subsequently reflected in a personal report to him by the Chairman.

5. In connection with the Board's discussions of security and disarmament issues as reflected in the Chairman's report, the Secretary-General notes that there was a broad recognition that while the transformation in relations between East and West had provided the international community with new openings, at the same time the conflict in the Middle East had exposed the flaws and weaknesses of the current system. Notwithstanding the prospects for progress, it was recognized that much remains to be done. A further point made was that international security arrangements must be able to meet the needs of large and small countries alike and that what was needed was multilateral cooperation and multilateral action.

6. In addition, the Secretary-General would like to draw attention to some of the suggestions arising from the Board's discussions that might usefully be pursued by the international community:

Establishment of a global emergency system to provide early warning of crisis situations;

Significant strengthening of the mechanisms for preventive diplomacy and crisis prevention;

Promotion of understanding between suppliers and recipients of modern weapons-related technologies so as to check effectively their non-peaceful uses while facilitating technology transfer for peaceful purposes;

Acceleration of the chemical weapon convention negotiations in the Conference on Disarmament;

Actions to encourage the consideration of regional solutions to regional problems, including the active promotion of regional confidence- and security-building measures and regional conferences on security issues;

Establishment of a register of arms transfers as recommended by the recently concluded United Nations study on ways and means to promote transparency in international arms transfers;

Exploration of ways to control the illicit arms trade.

7. The Secretary-General expresses his appreciation of the thoughtful manner in which the Advisory Board has discharged its responsibilities since its inception. It has been able to hold a meaningful and pragmatic dialogue on arms control and disarmament throughout the years of tension between the two most heavily armed alliances in the 1980s and also offer comments over the years from the special vantage point of the experience and independence of its members.

8. The Board was informed of the status of recently completed or ongoing studies on disarmament issues carried out by the Secretary-General with the assistance of groups of experts. The Board expressed the view that the studies continue to contribute positively, and in a timely manner, to the international discussion of disarmament issues.

9. The Board welcomed the efforts of the group of experts that prepared the study on ways and means of promoting transparency in international transfers of conventional arms and took note of its conclusions and recommendations (A/46/301). In particular, the Board reiterated its strong support for the recommendation that a universal and non-discriminatory arms transfer register under the auspices of the United Nations should be established as soon as possible.

10. Ms. Maj Britt Theorin, member of the Board and Chairperson of the study on charting potential uses of resources allocated to military activities for civilian endeavours to protect the environment, briefed the Board on the conclusions and recommendations of that study. Two additional studies, due for submission to the General Assembly at the forty-seventh and forty-eighth sessions, were also brought to the attention of the Board. They are, respectively, the study on defensive security concepts and policies and the study on specific aspects related to the application of different confidence-building measures in outer space. Mr. Boris Krasulin, Chairman of the Board and also Chairman of the study on defensive security, informed the Board on the status of that study group which had recently held its first session and agreed its outline for the draft report.

11. The Board was given a presentation on behalf of the Department for Disarmament Affairs on the implementation of the programme of activities of the World Disarmament Campaign. It was explained to the Board that a major effort was being made, through a variety of publications, meetings and other events, to reflect the changed international situation and the complex nature of disarmament issues. In the discussion that followed the Board was informed of the financial pressures bearing on the extent of Campaign activities.

12. The Board expressed warm praise for the manner in which the work of the Campaign was being pursued by those concerned in the Department for Disarmament Affairs. In recognizing the significant efforts being made towards achieving the aims of the Campaign, both within the United Nations and among non-governmental organizations, the Board expressed its understanding of the difficulties being encountered. The Board recommended that Campaign activities should move away from generalities towards specific issues and their regional contexts. The further deliberations of the Board on the Campaign are contained in the relevant report of the Secretary-General.

13. The Board was also given an overview of the activities of the three Regional Centres, in Africa, Asia and the Pacific, and Latin America and the Caribbean. A principal difficulty facing them was again financial in that they were being asked to increase their activities, specifically those related to regional issues, but that there continued to be insufficient funds. The view was expressed that it would be useful for some of the members of the Board to visit one or more of the centres in order to interact with them and become more acquainted with their programmes and difficulties.

14. In its capacity as Board of Trustees of UNIDIR the Advisory Board considered and approved the report of the Director of UNIDIR on the Institute's activities in 1990/91 and the research programme and proposed annual budget for 1992. In addition, the Board was also informed by the Director of UNIDIR on the elements of UNIDIR's programme for 1993. An account of the Board's deliberations is contained in document A/46/334, annex II, including the Board's recommendation of a subvention from the regular budget of the United Nations amounting to $220,000 for 1992. The Board expressed the view that the annual subvention from the regular budget of the United Nations would continue to be needed in the future in order to assure the independence of the Institute.

ANNEX

Members of the Advisory Board on Disarmament Matters

Mr. Oluyemi Adeniji
Ambassador, Deputy Director-General
for Regional Affairs
Ministry for External Affairs
Abuja, Nigeria

Mr. Marcos Castrioto de Azambuja
Ambassador, Secretary-General
for Foreign Policy
Ministry of Foreign Relations
Brasilia, D.F., Brazil

Mr. Léon Bouvier
Ambassadeur de France
Paris, France

Mr. Muchkund Dubey
Foreign Secretary to the Government of India
Ministry of External Affairs
New Delhi, India

Mr. Omran El-Shafei
Ambassador
Former Assistant Foreign Minister
Cairo, Egypt

Mr. Ignac Golob
Ambassador of Yugoslavia to Mexico
Mexico, D.F., Mexico

Dr. Ryukichi Imai
Ambassador
Musashino, Tokyo
Japan

Mr. Juraj Kralik
Ambassador, Permanent Representative of the
Czech and Slovak Federal Republic
to the United Nations Office at Geneva
Geneva, Switzerland

Mr. Boris P. Krasulin
First Deputy Director
International Organizations Department
Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Moscow, USSR

Mr. Bjorn Inge Kristvik
Ambassador
Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Oslo, Norway

Sir Ronald Mason
Former Chief Scientific Adviser to the
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Mr. Agha Shahi
Professor Emeritus of International Relations
to Universities in Pakistan
Chairman, Islamabad Council on World Affairs
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Mr. Tadeusz Strulak
Ambassador
Department of the United Nations System
Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Warsaw, Poland

Ms. Maj Britt Theorin
Ambassador
Chairman of the Swedish Disarmament Delegation
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Mr. Jayantha Dhanapala, Director of UNIDIR, is an ex officio member of the Advisory Board when acting in its capacity as the Board of Trustees of UNIDIR